(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to bring in a legislation to regulate foreign universities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such universities would be amenable to regulation of UGC; and

(d) how far this would help to ensure the quality of the courses that would be conducted by these universities in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government intends to provide a regulatory framework in regard to foreign education providers, consistent with the national policy on education.

Statistics of drop-outs

755. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government maintain any statistics of the rate of dropout among the school going children in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to have some special time-bound programme to bring down the level of drop-outs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In 2003-04. drop-out rate for the country as a whole for Classes l-IV, Classes l-VIII and Classes l-X was 31.5%, 52.3% and 62.7% respectively.

(c) A multi pronged approach has been adopted under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for reducing drop-out rates. One set of interventions relates to strengthening of primary and upper primary schools and improving the quality of education through improvement in school infrastructure, recruitment of additional teachers, annual school grants, regular training of teachers, introduction of teaching practices that make classrooms more joyful and attractive, regular academic

support to teachers etc. On the other hand, several interventions aim at improving the demand for schooling through community mobilization, special interventions for enrolment and retention fo vulnerable groups of children including girls and children of weaker sections. Measures are also being undertaken to strengthen the accountability of the schools system towards parents and community. The Mid-Day Meals Scheme that provides a cooked meal to all children of primary schools and alternative education centers has also helped in checking dropouts.

Drop-outs Andhra Pradesh

756. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is little difference in the school dropout rate in Andhra Pradesh from the year 2001-02 onwards in primary, secondary and at senior secondary level;

(b) whether it is also a fact that dropout rate of girls is more in comparison to boys for the same period in spite of having so many schemes, including Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan;

(c) if so, the steps Government are contemplating to reduce this percentage in the State; and

(d) the reason for low enrolment of students, particularly in rural areas, in the State when compared to other States?

THE MINISTER .OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) Drop-out rates (provisional) for Andhra Pradesh for Classes l-V, Classes l-VIII and Classes l-X from 2001-02 to 2003-04 are given below:

	Classes l-V			Classes l-VIII			Classes l-X		
Year	Boys	Girts	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2001-02	42.6	43.5	43.0	61.3	65.2	63.1	68.5	72.0	70.1
2002-03	4.1.7	41.8	41.7	58.1	62.0	59.9	67.4	70.8	69.0
2003-04	42.4	42.8	42.6	57.9	61.8	59.8	65.1	68.5	66.7'

Drop-out rates for senior secondary classes is not maintained by the Ministry.

(c) As stated by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, State Government has taken the following measures for reducing dropouts: